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**From:** HJR153  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 08, 2004 2:38 PM  
**To:** HJR153  
**Subject:** HJR153 - Melanie S. Miller

Name: Melanie S. Miller  
Street: 528 Locust Avenue  
City, State, Zip: Charlottesville, VA 22902  
Phone Number: 434-244-0180  
Email: mpmiller@adelphia.net  
Utility Type: all

Company Name: Dominion VA Power, Adelphia, Sprint

Comments: I would like to see all utility lines undergrounded for many reasons:

Safety- Accidental Death and Injuries due to utility work, traffic accidents involving utility poles, tree trimming, downed power lines, injuries due to disrupted power (a person was killed during Isabel by falling down stairs), extreme temperature exposure due to lack of heat or air-conditioning.

Safety- Chemical Exposure due to wood poles leaching treatment chemicals into the ground and pole treatment facilities.

Safety- Electromagnetic Field Exposure along and under high voltage lines. Some studies (but not all) have linked this to higher cancer risk.

Economic- Storm Loss that causes food spoilage at grocery stores, restaurants, and in residences.

Lost revenue by local businesses without power such as sales, production time, time of salaried employees. Damaged equipment due to power surges such as computers, televisions and other electronic equipment.

Loss of life and costs associated with that.

Decline in Property Values due to electromagnetic field exposure concern for property near high voltage lines or due to a unwillingness to provide mortgages for structures that could be damaged by falling poles.

Aesthetic- Historic Areas such as downtowns that thrive on tourist dollars would be better served to not have the clutter and historic inaccuracy of utility lines. Entrance corridors to VA's cities are littered with lines and poles giving a poor impression of our towns. Trees are butchered into unhealthy, irregular and unattractive shapes. Small trees, rather than large majestic trees that traditionally lined our streets are being planted so as not to be butchered. While small trees are better than none, large trees should be able to be used without fear of untrained trimmers bearing chainsaws.

Expense: Mandate that work can be done by licensed contractors and bids do not have to go through utility companies, as it is now with VA Dominion Power.

New technology is available to make trenching easier, cheaper and less disruptive by tunneling.

Cost should be shared by utility companies, local governments and home/business owners. Rates could be increased on all customers as all residents indirectly benefit by having utilities undergrounded.

Public Policy should be established at the state level as local governments do not have the strength to go head to head with the power companies. Charlottesville may actually be able to require undergrounding by the way our franchise agreement is written but city council will not even have the legal research done to verify this because they fear a lawsuit by VA Dominion Power.

Please make something positive happen here and do not be intimidated by the deep pockets and loud voices of the utility companies that you regulate.

Thanks,

Melanie Miller

Require undergrounding for any new construction projects or remodels above a certain dollar amount.

Undergrounding doesn't have to happen all at once. However we need a plan that spans the next 40-50 years.